

# TASC

*Technical Assistance and Services Center*

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## **Flex Program Hour Highlights**

**Date:** June 28, 2000

**Topic:** Community Development – State Models

**Facilitator:** Terry Hill, TASC

**Guests:** Val Schott, Oklahoma  
Pat Schou, Illinois

### **Oklahoma – Val Schott and Gerald Doeksen**

Oklahoma's approach to community development is associated with the Rural Health Works (RHW) program, and includes educating communities about the economic impact of the local healthcare industry. Hospitals considering conversion to Critical Access go through a three-month process that includes:

- A Steering Committee of 30-35 people within the local community is formed to include businesses, healthcare professionals, minorities, healthcare consumers, churches, economic development personnel, etc. They are educated about the impact of the healthcare sector to the local economy and provide input into the planning process. I-PLAN is used to calculate economic impact. According to Val, the Steering Committee is “hooked” once they understand the economic importance of keeping healthcare dollars at home.
- Products offered to the community include an economic assessment, directory of health and human services resources in the community, and a telephone survey of healthcare consumers. Secondary health data is also used.
- The Steering Committee is responsible for recommending a local plan of action. A feasibility study is often done after the recommendations are made to ensure the community has the demographics to support their plan.

Gerald Doeksen encouraged state offices to base their community development efforts on tools and models other states and organizations have already developed. He asserted, “There is no need to recreate the wheel when there are an abundance of resources available.”

### **Illinois – Pat Schou**

The Illinois Hospital Association has taken a lead in community development efforts in the past several years in cooperation with the State Office of Rural Health, partially supported by grant dollars from the Flex Program. The Illinois program centers on community consumerism, appeal to the physician sector, and develops specific community-based strategies for critical access hospital conversion.

For information on available community development resources, please contact TASC at 218-720-0700 or [tasc@ruralresource.com](mailto:tasc@ruralresource.com).

Next conference call: Wednesday, July 12 at 3:00 p.m. EST.